

**Metadiscourse in Academic Prose:  
A Contrastive Analysis of English and Persian Research Articles**

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Metadiscourse defined as non-propositional constituent of a text (Vande Kopple, 1985) is considered a rhetoric feature of academic discourse and the degree to which it is used indicates the writer's willingness to explicitly guide the reader's interpretation of the text (Hyland, 1998). Due to the significant role of metadiscourse in providing both cohesion and coherence of the text, the present study was intended to compare and contrast the use of metadiscourse elements in the recently published Persian and English research articles chosen from among native English and Persian scientific journals. Included in the study are both language and discipline as independent variables. The research specifically tried to find out:

- (1) whether English and Persian differed in making use of metadiscourse elements in academic texts; and
  - (2) whether they (the two languages) made a discipline-specific use of metadiscourse elements.
- The corpus used to answer the intended questions totally consisted of 102293 words in the two languages, with English comprising 50602 words and Persian 51691 words. The corpus also included two fields, i.e., Applied Linguistics (50581 words, 9 articles) and Computer Engineering (51712 words, 10 articles), as two streams of the humanities and non-humanities, respectively. Using the metadiscoursal framework provided by Hyland (1998), the corpus analysis showed that (1) English and Persian differed in making use of metadiscourse elements and Persian was more writer responsible than English and (2) Applied Linguistics made more use of the metadiscourse elements than Computer Engineering. The results are indicative of both native language-and- discipline-specificity of metadiscourse. As regards the native language, they explain how Persian writers take responsibility to express certainty, speak directly, indicate affective attitude, and express obligation more than English writers. Discipline-specificity of findings suggests that humanities demand more explicit continuity and connection of thought as compared with non-humanities. This may be attributed to the requirements of the abstractions in which humanities are grounded.